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ABSTRACT

This book examines the interactions of Mexican and Chinese immigrant students with other students from the same country (co-nationals) and their exchanges of information about experiences in U.S. schools. Research focused on 74 Chinese and 78 Mexican immigrant students, aged 11-17, in Boston and the San Francisco Bay Area, who received school-related messages from co-national peers located in their country of origin and the United States. Chapters 1-2 present an overview of the theory and concepts of transnationalism and transnational social spaces and discuss their applicability to immigrant students in the school context. Chapter 3 describes the research project, its origins in the Longitudinal Immigration Student Adaptation Study of five immigrant groups, and qualitative research methods used. Chapter 4 reviews immigration patterns and experiences of Mexican and Chinese immigrants and briefly describes the educational systems of China and Mexico. The remainder of the book presents findings, categorizing the content of transnational messages as academic matters, learning English, general qualitative messages, peer relations, school infrastructure and services, general social issues, and teacher abilities and relationships with students. Analyses point out how the messages reflect resources and sources of vulnerabilities in the receiving community and school. Appendices present the student questionnaire, data tables, and figures. (Contains 131 references and an index.) (SV)

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